

GET OUT THE VOTE 2016

A VOTING AND ELECTION GUIDE FOR NEW JERSEY CITIZENS
WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES



The Arc[®]
of New Jersey

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Election Day 2016 is almost upon us, but before you head to the polls to cast your ballot for a candidate, it's important to understand the process of voting, the rules, and the impact of an election. When you vote, you are picking a representative to speak on your behalf. This person will make many decisions as your elected official, and many of those choices and decisions will affect you and other members of your community. Services and supports for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as education and health care, are among the issues you should consider when electing a representative.

Candidates on the ballot this year are on the federal level. Voters will choose a new president for the first time in eight years and New Jersey residents will also decide who represents them in Congress. Our state is represented by 12 members of congress and their terms are two-years long.

With this in mind, we hope that this **Get Out The Vote 2016 Guide** will help you in advance of Election Day. It contains a number of key dates and instructions that outline how you can become a registered voter and where and how you can cast your vote.

Please check out our website, www.getv2016.org, for additional information and content.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Who are the candidates?

Voters in November will elect the next President of the United States and Congressional representatives in the State of New Jersey. In addition, residents of State's 18th District will elect a new State Senator and a new Assembly person, as the previous representatives vacated their seats last year. The list of individuals running, broken down by district, can be accessed here: <http://bit.ly/CandidatesNJ2016>

Incumbents are noted with an asterisk.

What is voting?

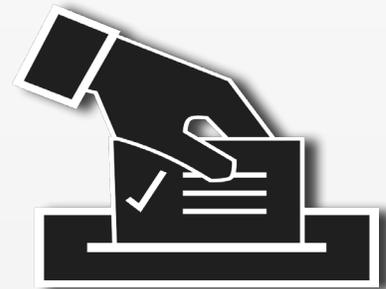
Voting is your right. Voting is your choice. Voting is your voice.

Why should you vote?

Voting allows you to elect people that will represent you and fight for the issues you believe in.

Who can vote?

To vote you must be a citizen of the United States, at least 18 years old and registered to vote. You cannot vote if you are in jail, on parole or on probation. You must also be able to understand what it means to vote. It is **not** legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she has an intellectual or other disability. Only a judge can declare that an individual lacks capacity to vote. It is **not** legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she has a legal guardian. It is **not** legal to deny someone the right to vote based on the fact that he or she lives in an institution, developmental center or group home. It is **not** legal to deny someone the right to



vote based on the fact that he or she receives services or supports related to a disability.

When is voting?

Voting takes place on Tuesday, November 8, 2016.

What time is voting?

Voting starts at 6 a.m. and ends at 8 p.m.

How can I register to vote?

You can register to vote by mailing in the Voter Registration Application to your county clerk. You can also register to vote in person at the Office of the County Commissioner of Registration. The application can be printed from the New Jersey Division of Elections web site: www.state.nj.us/state/elections. You must register by **October 18, 2016**. To find your county clerk, visit <http://bit.ly/RegisterinNJ>



How can I vote by mail instead of in person?

If you want to vote by mail instead of in person, it is a 2-step process.

Step 1 - Complete and return your Vote By Mail Application. You can download a Vote By Mail Application online at: <http://bit.ly/VotebyMail2016> or call the office of the New Jersey Division of Elections at **609-292-0034**. After completing the application, mail it to your County Clerk. You can mail the application to the office of the County Clerk up to 7 days before the election. You can also return your application in person to the office of the County Clerk until 3:00pm the day before the election.

Step 2 - Complete and return your Vote by Mail Ballot. (A Vote by Mail Ballot used to be called an absentee ballot.) After receiving your application, the County Clerk will send you the Vote by Mail Ballot. Follow the instructions on the ballot to vote. You must follow directions on the ballot EXACTLY or your vote may not be counted. For example, you have to sign the certificate attached to the back flap of the envelope after sealing it. To have your ballot count as a vote, you must return the ballot to the office of the Board of Elections before polls close on Election Day. You can only vote ONE TIME in any election. If you have already asked for a Vote by Mail Ballot, you may NOT vote in person during that election.

What do I need to vote in person?

You must bring proof that you live in your county before you can register to vote and cast your vote on Election Day. Proof can include a driver's license, a student ID, a government issued ID or a document with your name and address on it such as a bank statement or government issued check like a Social Security check. If you did not provide identification to the county commissioner of registration, or if the identification information could not be verified (i.e., your driver's license number or the last four digits of your social security number), you may be asked to show identification at the polling place when you go to vote.

Where do I vote?

Polling places are typically set up at schools, libraries or firehouses in your town. Registered voters are assigned a specific location to vote. To find out where your polling place is located, and if you

are registered, visit the NJ Division of Elections web site at www.state.nj.us/state/elections. The web site will also let you know if your polling place is ADA compliant or accessible.

Are polling places accessible for people with disabilities?

One accessible polling machine adapted for audio must be available at every polling place to allow voters with a visual impairment to verify and cast their votes in private and without assistance. Polling places should be integrated settings, meaning that all people (with and without disabilities) should vote together in the same space. People with disabilities have the right **(1) to reasonable accommodations that make it possible for them to vote, and (b) to use auxiliary aids (such as Assisted Listening equipment, registration forms in Braille and large print, ramps to access the polling area) to ensure that communication is effective. You can also either (a) ask a friend, family member or staff member to enter the booth with you, or (b) ask for help from poll workers at your polling place on Election Day.**

What should I do if I go to vote and am told I can't vote because I have a disability?

If you have a problem on Election Day with being allowed to vote or getting assistance with voting, call Disability Rights NJ at **1-800-922-7233**.

BALLOT QUESTIONS:

This year's ballot asks voters to decide on two constitutional amendments.

The first amendment would dedicate all of the revenue from the State tax on motor fuels to the Transportation Trust Fund. The current dedication is 10.5 cents per gallon on gasoline and diesel fuel. The amendment also dedicates all of the revenue from the tax on gross receipts of the sale of petroleum products to the Transportation Trust Fund. The current minimum dedication is \$200 million per year. The amendment does not change the current tax on motor fuels or petroleum products. The dedication to the Transportation Trust Fund means that the revenue is only used for transportation purposes.

The second amendment would allow the Legislature to pass laws to permit casino gambling outside Atlantic City. Two casinos would be allowed, but both must be located in towns that are at least 72 miles from Atlantic City. The amendment says the State's share of revenue from the operation of the two casinos and of the casinos in Atlantic City would be used for programs and property tax relief for senior citizens and residents with disabilities. The revenue would also be used to assist Atlantic City in a variety of different ways.

To read the questions ahead of time, click here: <http://bit.ly/Ballot1> and here: <http://bit.ly/Ballot2>

Want to know more about the candidates?

In an effort to learn more about the candidates, The Arc of New Jersey distributed a questionnaire about disability issues to individuals running for office. Responses from the candidates will be posted on our web site, www.govt2016.org, beginning Monday, **Oct. 10, 2016**.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS – WHY I VOTE!

Ruth Churchill, *Parent*



As parents of children or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, we are committed to doing all that we can to secure the care that they require at every age. We search for the appropriate services to meet their needs from early intervention when they are infants, to vocational programs when they are adults. We search for the best caregivers either with respite in our homes or in residential settings, always trying to find that place where he or she will be valued. In these searches, we have all come to understand that excellent programs need constant funding and that the direct support professionals who care for our children need to be paid a decent wage.

To that end, we must educate ourselves about proposed legislation which addresses these issues and then urge our local, state, and national representatives to support these bills. We are all well aware of our daunting and often exhausting responsibilities to provide the best possible medical, educational, recreational, vocational, and residential services for our children. However, now we must add another equally important item to that ever-growing list: We must get out and vote for representatives who will create and support legislation which will help us to protect and to enrich the lives of all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Ellen Moskowitz, *Self-Advocate*



“ I think voting is important for everybody to get out there and at least they can see that people with disabilities do care about what is going on in our country. Also, with the election that is coming up, it gives people the chance to use their right to vote and choose a candidate they like or dislike.”

Todd Emmons, *Self-Advocate*



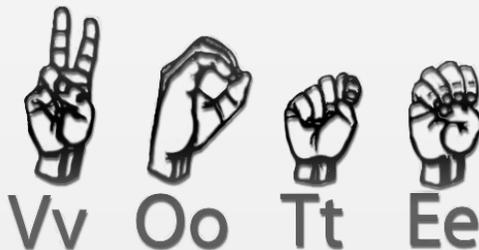
“The reason why voting is important is because it is your right to vote and this year is for the presidency of the United States. It’s the most important thing to do and it’s your voice and ability to be heard.”

Gregory Felzenberg, *Self-Advocate*



“The presidential election is the most important election, in my opinion. We have a chance to pick the candidate that can do the best job as Commander in Chief. The President can help create a better economy and jobs for people with disabilities. The President is the head of the federal government, which can fund programs to help students with disabilities receive education, healthcare, and job training. Educated citizens make for a strong nation. Voting is our way to make sure that elected officials, like senators and assembly members, protect the rights of people with disabilities.”

GET OUT THE





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